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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KINGSTON 5467

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, JM
SUBJECT: MANLEY AND THE PNP WIN SMASHING VICTORY

1. SUMMARY. PRIME MINISTER MICHAEL MANLEY HAS LED HIS PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) TO A LANDSLIDE VICTORY (WHICH FEW FORESAW) OVER THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP). ALTHOUGH THE FINAL RESULTS HAVE NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED, IT IS CERTAIN THAT THE PNP HAS WON AT LEAST 47 OF THE SEATS IN THE 60-MEMBER HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE PM HAS MANAGED TO OBTAIN A CLEAR MANDATE FOR HIS PARTY'S POLICIES AND PROGRAMS OF "DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM". END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO NEWS BROADCASTS THIS MORNING, THE
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NUMBER OF SEATS DECIDED IS 55, OF WHICH THE PNP

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KINGSTON 5457

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1. SUMMARY. PRIME MINISTER MICHAEL MANLEY HAS LED HIS PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) TO A LANDSLIDE VICTORY (WHICH FEW FORESAW) OVER THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP). ALTHOUGH THE FINAL RESULTS HAVE NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED, IT IS CERTAIN THAT THE PNP HAS WON AT LEAST 47 OF THE SEATS IN THE 60-MEMBER HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE PM HAS MANAGED TO OBTAIN A CLEAR MANDATE FOR HIS PARTY'S POLICIES AND PROGRAMS OF "DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM". END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO NEWS BROADCASTS THIS MORNING, THE
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NUMBER OF SEATS DECIDED IS 53, OF WHICH THE PNP

HAS TAKEN AN ESTIMATED 46. ALL MEMBERS OF THE LAST GOVERNMENT WHO CONTESTED THE ELECTION HAVE BEEN RETURNED WITH ONE EXCEPTION (MRS. ROSE LEON, FORMER MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT). MORE SIGNIFICANTLY PERHAPS, THE SIZE OF THE PNP'S VICTORY INSURED SUCCESS FOR A NUMBER OF THE PARTY'S YOUNGER, MORE RADICAL MEMBERS. THE NEW HOUSE WILL INCLUDE SUCH PROMINENT PNP "PROGRESSIVES" AS ARNOLD BERTRAM, D K DUNCAN, HUGH SMALL, AND DESMOND LEAKEY. THIS GROUP WILL NOW BEGIN TO ASSERT ITSELF FAR MORE ENERGETICALLY, ESPECIALLY SINCE DUNCAN (WHO IS PNP GENERAL SECRETARY) AND BERTRAM (WHO HAS WORKED OUT OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE) CAN MAKE A VALID CLAIM TO HAVING CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE PNP'S OVERALL ELECTORAL STRATEGY AND THUS ITS ELECTORAL SUCCESS. AT A MINIMUM, THE NEW PNP CABINET WILL HAVE A DECIDEDLY MORE RADICAL TINGE.

3. THE CAUSES UNDERLYING THE JLP'S DEBACLE THE EXTENT OF WHICH FEW FORESAW WILL DOUBTLESS BE THE SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION FOR MONTHS TO COME. ALTHOUGH THE OPPOSITION PARTY HAD BEGUN THE CAMPAIGN WITH WHAT APPERED TO BE CONSIDERABLE ENERGY, A SENSE OF ORGANIZATION AND MORE THAN ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES, IT LOST ITS MOMENTUM WELL BEFORE THE LAST WEEKS OF THE ELECTION. WHILE ENDEAVORING TO PROJECT ITSELF AS A PARTY ESPECIALLY WELL-EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH JAMAICA'S MOUNTING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS, ITS MANIFESTO WAS (LIKE SO MUCH IT DID) VERY LATE IN THE GAME, AND OFFERED LITTLE POSITIVE OR PARTICULAR. ALTHOUGH THE JLP ASSERTED THAT IT OFFERED A CLEAR ALTERNATIVE TO THE PNP, IT FAILED TO DEMONSTRATE THE CHARACTER AND EXTENT OF THAT ALTERNATIVE.
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4. THIS FAILURE WAS ONE ABOUT WHICH THE JLP MIGHT HAVE DONE SOMETHING. ITS OTHER SHORTCOMINGS WERE BEYOND ITS ABILITY TO ALTER. FOR EXAMPLE, ITS CANDIDATES WERE LARGELY UNKNOWN. THOSE FEW NEWCOMERS WHO RAN SUCCESSFULLY TENDED TO COME FROM FAMILIES OF SOME LOCAL PROMINENCE. ANOTHER FACTOR

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WAS THE PNP'S ABILITY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE INSTRUMENTALITIES OF GOVERNMENT. IT MADE FULL USE OF THE AGENCY FOR PUBLIC INFORMATIONN AND THE STATE-OWNED, OSTENSIBLY AUTONOMOUS JAMAICA BROADCASTING CORPORATION. THE "IMPACT PROGRAM" WAS USED TO GIVE SHORT-TERM, BUT KEY EMPLOYMENT TO THOUSANDS OF JAMAICAN POOR. MOREOVER, THE PNP HAD A RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT ON WHICH TO RUN--THE BAUXITE LEVY, THE MINIMUM WAGE, PROVISION OF LAND, EXTENSION OF SUFFRAGE TO 18-YEAR OLDS, EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN-- TO NAME A FEW ACCOMPLISHMENTS. AND, IN THE LAST ANALYSIS, THE PNP HAD-- AND WAS PERSONIFIED BY--MICHAEL MANLEY. (JUST HOW IMPORTANT OUTRIGHT INTIMIDATION AND BALLOT-RIGGING MAY HAVE BEEN IS HARD TO ESTIMATE. BOTH PARTIES USED THESE TACTICS, THE PNP MORE EXTENSIVELY AND EFFECTIVELY.) IN CONTRAST, THE JLP HAD ONLY A COLORLESS LEADER AND LACKLUSTRE NEGATIVE SLOGANS ON WHICH TO RELY. IN THE END, IT LEFT THE IMPRESSION THAT THE JLP WANTED POWER TO KEEP THE NATION'S BOOKS MORE SCRUPULOUSLY, AND OFFER MORE TO THE FOREIGN INVESTOR.

5. IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF THE ELECTION, ATTENTION SEEMS TO BE FOCUSED ON PRESERVING ORDER. PRIME MINISTER MANLEY HAS CALLED ON HIS FOLLOWERS TO RESPECT THOSE WHO SUPPORTED THE OPPOSITION, AND TO AVOID RECRIMINATION. JLP LEADER SEAGA HAS PUBLICLY CHARACTERIZED THE PNP VICTORY AS DECISIVE,

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INDICATING TO HIS FOLLOWERS THAT THERE IS NOTHING TO BE GAINED FROM ANY VIOLENT REACTION TO THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE. IT IS OUR VIEW THAT THE SIZE OF THE PNP WIN REDUCES THE RISK OF TROUBLE (AS DOES THE FACT THAT THE ISLAND REMAINS UNDER A STRICT BAN AGAINST PUBLIC MEETINGS, PROCESSIONS, AND OTHER KINDS OF GATHERINGS FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER MONTH).

6. BUT THE REAL TASK BEFORE THE PNP IS ECONOMIC. IT HAS BEEN GRANTED AN UNMISTAKEABLE MANDATE TO PRESS ON WITH ITS POLICIES OF "DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM", WITH WHATEVER INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES THEY

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MAY ENTAIL. BUT ITS FUNDAMENTAL CHORE WILL BE TO RESTORE SOME MEASURE OF VIGOR TO THE ISLAND'S SHAKEN ECONOMY. (COMMENT OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

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AND PROSPECTS, AS WELL AS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE U.S., WILL BE PROVIDED IN SEPARATE MESSAGES.) THE PNP'S SUBSTANTIAL MAJORITY MEANS THAT IT IS FREE TO INTRODUCE INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND, PERHAPS MORE IMPORANTLY, TO TAKE THE HARD DECISIONS REQUIRED TO REORDER JAMAICA'S ECONOMY. HOWEVER, THE KEY ELEMENTS WILL BE ITS OWN WILL AND ENERGY.

7. WHILE THE PNP'S MANDATE LEAVES IT FREE TO MOVE IN NEW , AND POSSIBLY BOLD DIRECTIONS, THE VERY SIZE OF ITS MAJORITY MAKES IT MORE THAN NORMALLY VULNERABLE TO FAILURE TO DELIVER ON PROMISES.
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THE JAMAICAN PEOPLE HAVE DEMONSTRATED THEIR BELIEF--

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AND VOTING IS AN ACT OF FAITH-- THAT THE PNP CAN, THROUGH ITS POLICIES AND PROGRAMS, OFFER THEM A BETTER LIFE, HOWEVER THAT MAY BE DEFINED. BUT IT IS THE PNP WHICH WILL NOW BE HELD FULLY ACCOUNTABLE. THE OPPOSITION JLP NOW IS IN NO POSITION TO BLOCK THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMS OF THE PNP OR EVEN BE AN EFFECTIVE "LOYAL OPPOSITON," SERVING AS THE PUBLIC'S WATCHDOG AND CALLING THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTENTION TO LAPSES AND SHORTCOMINGS. IN OTHER WORDS, JAMAICANS NOW HAVE A PARLIAMENT WHICH IS FREE TO PASS SUCH LEGISLATION, INCLUDING CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, AS IT DEEMS NECESSARY--OR EXPEDIENT. IF THE NEW GOVERNMENT FINDS ITSELF UNABLE TO DEAL WITH ITS ECONOMIC PROGRAMS EFFECTIVELY, AND IF IT BEGINS TO ENCOUNTER POPULAR REACTION TO THE PROGRAM SHORTFALLS WHICH WILL FOLLOW, THE ONLY RESTRAINT WHICH IT WILL CONFRONT ON ANY TEMPTATION TO ADOPT EXTRAORDINARY POWERS WILL BE THE RESTRAINT IT IMPOSES ON ITSELF. WHETHER THE PNP GOVERNMENT AND MICHAEL MANLEY WOULD, IN THE SETTING, POSSES THAT MEASURE OF SELF-DISCIPLINE REMAINS TO BE SEEN.
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